

NATIONAL PLANNING SUMMIT

A GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING (GDP) ALLIANCE

In a bold and collaborative move, the Government and the Private Sector are taking a "fresh new" approach to driving the implementation of the 2007 National Planning Summit (NPS) initiatives in an effort to spur economic growth and development. Building on the partnership and work already being carried out as a result of the National Planning Summit in November 2007, the Government has moved to establish Expert Teams as a part of the monitoring framework in order to support the NPS Monitoring Board's effort to drive the successful implementation and monitoring of the priority initiatives identified at the Summit. To date six (6) such Teams are operational and draw upon the knowledge and expertise of some of leaders and senior persons from both private and public sector.

This framework is supported by the National Planning Summit Programme Management Office (PMO) at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). The NPS/PMO provides programme management and technical assistance where necessary to the Teams and the various initiatives/projects that are being implemented by the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the public sector. The work of the Teams will help to shape the Government's plans and priorities going forward.

At the recently convened 2009 General Assembly of the NPS Monitoring Board and Expert Teams, the Honourable Prime Minister called on all present to "think outside of the box" and be innovative in identifying solutions to today's challenges. He noted that the 2007 Summit had been an opportunity for new thinking, resolve, commitment and engagement with the private sector;

urged the Assembly to remain committed to the principles agreed during the Summit; and emphasised that the public-private sector dialogue continues to be imperative. He reaffirmed the Government's determination and willingness to take whatever steps were necessary to lead the country successfully into the future.

Chairman of the Monitoring Board, the Honourable Karl Samuda, Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, indicated that the Initiative, which started in 2007, has borne fruit. "It is working and many persons

have dedicated a significant amount of their time in working to implement the goals of the



2009 General Assembly of the National Planning Summit Expert Teams

Summit." He reiterated the need for the Teams to focus on the prioritisation of those areas of greatest concern, which if addressed, would lead to national development; and to continue their work as final success would

(Continued on Page 2)

National Planning Summit Special Projects

Under the NPS, there are some special large-scale investment projects which were identified and recommended as the most attractive and immediate opportunities for generating jobs and economic stimulation in the country. The ones currently being implemented are listed below:

- ⇒ **International Financial Services Center (IFC)**
- * **Lead Entity: Ministry of Finance & Public Service**
- ⇒ **Caymanas Economic Free Zone (CEFZ)**
- * **Lead Entity: Ministry of Industry, Investment & Commerce**
- ⇒ **ICT Park in Portmore**
- * **Lead Entity: Ministry of Industry, Investment & Commerce**

More on these projects in upcoming issues

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Upcoming Events of Interest:

- *JTI's Opportunities Jamaica '09, March 26, 2009*
- *EPA Development Programme Workshop, March 2009*
- *OPM/Planning & Development Division Roundtable, April 2009*

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...A “GDP” Alliance

ultimately hinge on continued willingness to work on the critical issues identified.

The Assembly, which was organised by the PMO and held with the Honourable Prime Minister on January 7, 2009; had as its key objective the evaluation and assessment of the Teams' progress to date and to ensure the alignment of the work of these Teams with the national framework and priorities.

Mr. Chris Zacca, President of the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ), in addressing the meeting on behalf of the private sector partners, emphasized the benefits of the partnership approach which has increased the optimism of the



“Development Dialogue” at its Best.

private sector in the process. “The NPS is working to address the major issues and problems being faced by Jamaica today. The work has started and there is real cooperation taking place. We believe that the Government is committed to advancing the issues.”

Chaired by key Ministers and private sector leaders the Teams fall under several planning theme areas of the 2007 Summit including: i) Tax Reform/Balancing the Budget/Debt Reduction: Minister Don Wehby; ii) Education and Training: Minister Andrew Holness; iii) Governance and Reducing Bureaucracy: Minister Dwight Nelson; iv) Land Titling Reform and v) Development Approvals Process: Minister Daryl Vaz; and vi) ICT/Job Creations: Mr. Mark Myers, Jamaica Chamber of Commerce. The Investment Promotion and Crime and Violence Teams among others will become operational this quarter.

Chairman’s Commentary

Minister Karl Samuda, Chairman /NPS Monitoring Board

The National Planning Summit held in November 2007 played an important role in providing a context for intensified public-private dialogue. The meeting ended with the consensus that the success of the initiatives identified would be a priority for both public and private sector leaders.

Since that meeting much has been accomplished, aspects of which have been highlighted in this newsletter. In keeping with the importance placed by the Government, dedicated resources have been provided for the establishment of the Programme Management Office in the Office of the Prime Minister to drive and monitor the implementation of

the agreed initiatives. In addition, key ministers have joined with private sector leaders to lead the development and implementation of the priority initiatives through expert teams. We are pleased also of welcoming trade union representation in the partnership. The work of the teams is helping to

inform government’s policy and to shape our priorities for the next financial year.

“The work of the teams is helping to inform government’s policy ...”

Emphasis has also been placed on developing special projects geared towards future job creation opportunities. The planning for the Caymanas Economic Zone and the International Financial Services Centre are two

such projects, which have the potential to generate significant investment thereby transforming the economy.

We are aware that you are eager to keep abreast of the status of the implementation of the initiatives and this Newsletter is the first of several new communications strategies aimed at updating stakeholders about the progress being made.

There is still much work to be done and we are committed to building on the progress that has already been made. We look forward to your continued partnership in this process as we seek to build a better future for all Jamaicans.

Private Sector Point of View

Christopher Zacca, President/PSOJ

The National Planning Summit had its genesis in November 2007 when The Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) initiated and organised a weekend of high level discussions among the key stakeholders responsible for Jamaica’s growth and development in the public and private sectors. It was 16 months ago that the focussed discussions, research, strategizing and careful planning led to the creation of a Monitoring Board and, later, Expert Teams devoted to addressing seven areas of focus that would help to jumpstart the economic recovery process: Job Creation & Investment Promotion, Balancing The Budget/Debt Reduction, Tax Reform, Land Titling Reform, Crime & Violence,

Education and Training, Governance & Reducing Bureaucracy.

We salute the members of the Government, in particular the Prime Minister the Honourable Bruce Golding, members of his Cabinet, as well as public sector officials who have worked with the members of the private sector team as partners in this process. Jamaica is our country ...where we have chosen to live, operate our businesses, work and raise our children. It is therefore imperative that we pool our expertise, experience and resources in an effort to achieve the level of national development for which we all yearn.

“..committing our energies and resources to continue this important work...”

As President of the PSOJ, I join with my colleagues in committing our energies and resources to continue this important work with the public sector to achieve these key national objectives that, we believe, will drive our nation’s economic growth.

“NPS Feature Presentations”

New Plans afoot for the ICT Sector

Following on the private-public dialogue that started at the NPS, it was decided that the initial focus for job creation activities would be within the ICT sector. The ICT/Job Creation Expert Team, headed by Mark Myers, the immediate past President of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, is pursuing the strategic expansion and diversification of the sector through the further development of the Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) industry.



The Team has developed a draft strategy paper which was presented at the NPS General Assembly and is to be finalized and submitted to Cabinet for approval in April 2009. Private sector consultations regarding ICT infrastructural development, especially as it pertains to the development of an ICT Park on the basis of a public-private sector partnership are ongoing. Collaborated with HEART/NTA on the development of BPO specific training programmes for the sector is being pursued and discussions are ongoing with the Ministries of Justice and National Security regarding the expedited passage of the Cyber Crime Bill (final draft to be completed March 2009) and the revision of the Proceeds of Crime Act. In order to guide the process, the Team has also commissioned a market assessment (Completion date March 31, 2009) that will provide a benchmark for Jamaica in relation to its main competitors in the key target niche service areas.

The ICT sector is globally one of the faster growing productive areas and Jamaica's competitive advantages (proximity to USA; trainable/customer oriented workforce; telecoms infrastructure) makes it the leading BPO location in the English-speaking Caribbean, capable of providing 9,000 new jobs over a 4-year period; and significant increases in government revenues.

Education Transformed

Several new initiatives are on-track to improve the delivery of education, have been outlined by the Minister of Education, Andrew Holness, chair of the NPS Education & Training Expert Team, which includes Milton Samuda (President/JCC), Mark McKenzie (PSOJ) and several Ministry personnel.

The Team's focus is on the establishment of a National Education Inspectorate (NEI), a National Education Trust (NET) and a National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC).

The NEI is expected to bring greater accountability to the education system by providing rigorous, independent evaluation of the standards and quality of delivery in education institutions. Already established as a project within the Ministry, a Chief Inspector, Mrs. Elaine Foster-Allen, is in place and the initial scoping of inspection programmes completed. The appointment of senior staff is to be completed by April 2009 and assessments of schools will begin in September 2009.

The NPSC Bill has been drafted by the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Council and the policy is at the White Paper stage. This is key as it will serve to advance the Ministry's thrust to re-emphasize our children as "Priority One" for parents and the Nation as a whole.

Cabinet has approved the establishment of the NET, which will be a secure source for on-going capital investment for infrastructure development in education. Part of the Trust's functions will be to manage a National Education Endowment Fund. It will also be the focal point through which the Ministry interfaces with the Diaspora and international organizations to raise donations. Also, in keeping with the mandate of the NPS, public/private partnerships are being targeted for the construction and maintenance of schools.



Tax Reform:

Simple, Equitable and Competitive

The Matalon Report of 2004 and several other reports have highlighted the need for comprehensive tax reform in Jamaica. All these studies have argued that Jamaica needs a tax system that is simple, equitable and competitive. The Tax Reform/Balancing the Budget/Debt Reduction Expert Team—headed by Senator Don Wehby—has focused significant attention on this area. Brian Denning (PWC) serves as the Tax Reform Lead, and he is joined by representatives from the private sector, academia, and the government.

The Team does not intend to re-invent the wheel as there is already widespread acceptance of the findings and recommendations of the Matalon Report and there is general consensus that there is a need for extensive tax reforms. In view of this, the Tax Team has reviewed existing studies and is currently working to finalize a blueprint for tax reform in Jamaica that provides both short-term and long-term strategies to implement tax changes.



Senator Wehby has noted that the recommendations of the NPS Tax Team will inform the 2009/2010 budget to be tabled in Parliament in April. The work of the Tax Reform Team underscores the importance of the public-private dialogue in helping to shape the policies of the government and highlights the continued relevance of the NPS initiatives agreed to in November 2007.

(In our Next Issue we will be featuring the significant and ongoing work of three (3) other NPS Expert Teams and/or Special Project Teams)



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Planning Today for Jamaica Tomorrow!

*A Branch of the Planning &
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www.nationalplanningsummitja.org

Coming Soon!!!

The NPS Programme Management Office (PMO)

The NPS Programme Management Office (PMO) is responsible for reinforcing and supporting the monitoring framework which provides leadership and technical guidance to the overall NPS process. Our role is one of coordinating and providing administrative and technical assistance to ensure the successful implementation of the strategic initiatives identified at the 2007 Summit; and rationalizing their implementation in the Public Sector and across Ministries.

Our work with the Monitoring Board - which is charged with driving the entire NPS imple-

mentation process, the seven (7) technical Expert Teams and three (3) Special Projects Teams, has proven to be both challenging and fruitful.

In addition to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the PMO has a dedicated staff complement of four that includes a Programme Director, two (2) Coordinators and an Administrative Officer. We also draw on additional technical expertise from the Planning & Development Division of OPM.

Our aim is to be a dynamic force behind the successful

implementation and achievement of the NPS developmental objectives; to provide a central point for communication, discussion and coordination between key stakeholders; and to lead the process of national dialogue around the NPS planning themes and key initiatives identified.

To this end we are focused on continuing to move the process forward, to reinforcing the trust among the partners and keeping the lines of communication open. By fostering communication we hope to make NPS the recognized voice of Private-Public Dialogue on the various issues related to the NPS planning themes.

*"...the recognized voice of
Public-Private Dialogue"*

Your "2 Cents" Worth

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Write in or send us an email and tell us what "GDP" issues are important to you.

- ⇒ What problems are you experiencing in doing business in Jamaica today?
- ⇒ What opportunities can Jamaicans take advantage of in these challenging times?
- ⇒ What do Jamaicans need to know in order to Survive 2009?
- ⇒ What should be the theme of the next National Planning Summit?

Partners in Dialogue

Useful Link-ups!!

- www.mic.gov.jm
- www.opm.gov.jm
- www.mof.gov.jm
- www.psoj.org
- www.jamaicachamber.org.jm
- www.moeyc.gov.jm
- www.pioj.gov.jm
- www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org
- www.takingresponsibility.org

Right click on the link and select "Open Hyperlink" to connect to webpage

Imagine Our Future

IMAGINE THIS!

Here's what to look out for in our Next Issue:

- ⇒ Clearing the Bottlenecks
- ⇒ Tackling Crime & Violence
- ⇒ The Benefits of Land Titling
- ⇒ and More.....



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NATIONAL PLANNING SUMMIT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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ALIGNING TRADE WITH DEVELOPMENT

“GDP” ALLIANCE - ROUNDTABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT SERIES

The National Planning Summit (NPS), in conjunction with the Ministry of Industry Investment and Commerce, held its first Roundtable Discussion Series on Aid for Trade (AFT) on May 4, 2009, at the Jamaica House, Banquet Hall. The aim of the forum was to provide stakeholders with a background to the global and local issues relating to AFT, so as to devise a coordinated position for Jamaica prior to the 2nd Regional Review on Aid for Trade in Latin America and the Caribbean held May 7-8, 2009 in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

The Roundtable Series is envisioned as a forum within which private and public sector stakeholders will discuss key issues important to Jamaica. Much time in Jamaica is spent devising tactical responses to challenges that invariably arise each day. There is, however, a dearth of forums within which to strategically think about how to position Jamaica for the future. The Roundtable Series will provide one such fora for strategic thinking.

The keynote speaker at the Aid for Trade Roundtable

“...increasing thrust by donor countries towards providing trade related aid.”

was Mrs. Pat Francis, the President of the International Trade Centre and Mrs. Alison Roofe from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade also presented on the negotiating agenda for Jamaica. Specifically, the objectives of the roundtable discussions were to: (1) identify the priorities for Jamaica that could be supported through AFTs; (2) achieve consensus on key country priorities; and (3) discuss the best strategies for accessing these funds.

The private and public sector participants were informed about the increasing thrust by donor countries towards providing trade related aid. The key categories of aid available under AFT are: i) Trade policy and regulations; ii) Build-

ing productive capacity; iii) Economic Infrastructure; and iv) Trade-related structural adjustments.

The integration of trade policies into broader country development policies and plans is an important step towards improving Jamaica's ability to penetrate global markets

and attain economic growth through international trade. The consensus from the Roundtable was that the recently completed National Export Strategy should form the basis of a strategy aimed at attracting trade-related aid. The Office of the Prime Minister will be working with JTI and the private sector players to devise this strategy.

Budget Debated The Relevance of NPS

The emphasis coming out of this year's budget presentations has only helped to underscore the continued importance of social partnerships and the need for even greater commitment and support for the work being carried out by the NPS Monitoring Board and Expert Teams.

In the Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework, the government identifies six (6) priority focus areas for ensuring Jamaica's development: i) Security and safety of our people; ii) A stable macro-economy; iii) Strong economic infrastructure; iv) Energy security and efficiency; v) Achievement-driven education and training; and iv) Effective governance.

This year's budget is clearly focused on reforms that will assist Jamaica in achieving its vision, and much of it falls within the existing NPS sphere of initiatives: Consolidation of statutory deductions; reduction of stamp duty & transfer tax; tax amnesty programme inviting compliance; National Education Inspectorate; Jamaica Teaching Council; The Parenting Commission; Private-public sector partnership in education infrastructure investments; reducing fiscal deficit and balancing the budget (medium term); implementation of the Police Force Strategic Review recommendations; advancing the land titling agenda; establishment of the One-Stop Shop for development approvals; reducing bureaucracy (critical bottlenecks); effectiveness of existing incentives reviewed; and establishing the feasibility of a Venture Capital Company. All of these are directly related to the realization of the NPS goals.

So, nearly two years after the 2007 Summit, the NPS maintains its relevance even in these economically challenging times. It should be recognized for its role in helping to build consensus and its initiatives should be further supported. Clear and measureable targets consistent with those of our national development plans should be agreed; actions for attaining the objectives rationalized; and implementation progress measured and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure we remain on track for success.

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Upcoming Events of Interest:

- NPS Monitoring Board meeting w/ the Team Chairs May 28, 2009
- Second “GDP” Alliance Roundtable for Development, June/July 2009

NPS Special Projects — International Financial Services Centre

The potential for Jamaica to be established as an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) and the anticipated benefits are clear: job creation, real estate development, diversification of Jamaica's economic base, increased government revenue and an expansion of our presence within the international financial market. Having assessed our prospects, Jamaica will seek to enter the market as a mid-value competitor with a strategy for developing into a Centre of Excellence. Initial focus would be on smaller niche markets, exploiting tax treaties and/or special access to larger markets. In this model local professionals will be required to perform most of the service provider jobs.

Cabinet has approved the establishment of a statutory body to manage the implementation and marketing activities of the IFSC; and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC) has assigned a full-time drafter to ensure promulgation of the relevant legislation by Mid-2009. The Team, headed by Minister Don Wehby has announced a new Implementation Committee, chaired by Mr. Eric Crawford, that will take the project forward until the statutory body is established. The Committee is supported by a secretariat established at Jamaica Trade & Invest.

A Chief Operating Officer has been contracted to manage the project with the support of specialist consultants who will be on board by May 2009 and will look at, inter alia, the refinement of the list of products and services that will be offered in our jurisdiction. Budgetary provision of \$102.6 million has been approved by Cabinet for the financial year 2009/2010.

Jamaica has much to offer at this time: a cache of professionals (chartered/qualified accountants, MBAs and lawyers); a strong regulatory framework; and a fast growing financial sector. The high quality of our transportation infrastructure/airports; our history as a stable democracy; proximity to the world's largest market (USA); and the availability of training facilities for professionals in the financial industry are all positives.

The aim is to offer a range of products and services including regional treasury management and fund



An IFSC will attract critical investment, and the creation of this new industry will help to spur Jamaica's economic growth.

management, with special interest in the area of sports and entertainment/copyright financing. There are opportunities for business and employment within the economy from the development of the International Ship's Registry. The concept of international ship registration is considered to play a key role in developing Jamaica as a shipping centre – a 'one-stop shop'. In tandem with ship registration, the development of Jamaica's aircraft registry is also under consideration. Another niche area, with great potential for job creation, is captive insurance.

This initiative will require maximum cooperation among all the stakeholders - public and private sectors alike - and we must use this period of economic decline to fashion a legislative and regulatory framework that embraces the new standards being developed, recognizes the importance of banking regulation and the need for proper supervision within the sector. In time, the global economy will recover, investors will return and Jamaica will be in a position to take full advantage of the inevitable upswing. With some aggressive marketing, Jamaica will be most appealing when international business once again begins to expand.

NPS Special Projects — Caymanas Economic Zone

On approximately 1,000 acres of prime real estate at Ferry, St Catherine emerges the plan for the Caymanas Economic Zone (CEZ). Home to the next great economic location for Jamaican enterprise and described by Minister Karl Samuda, Ministry of Industry, investment & Commerce (MIIC) as perhaps the most efficient utilisation of the resources located in the Caymanas area, it is anticipated to provide economic stimulus to the area and create a considerable number of new jobs in the next 3-5 years.

MIIC has been collaborating with the UDC, the Port Authority, the Ministry of Transport and Works and the Ministry of Agriculture to complete an impact assessment and other studies including ones for the provision of potable water and traffic impact. To add to its attractiveness, it is envisioned that the Tinson Pen airstrip will be relocated to a site adjacent to the economic complex and that there will be a leg of the railway that will lead to the port. All of which the Minister added, is critical to the overall development.

"...will provide a myriad of opportunities for fostering Jamaica's economic growth and development."

The project entails the build-out of units that will service the ICT industry, the services industry, and provide warehousing and light manufacturing, such as agro-processing. Discussions have been held with overseas partners, and the ministry is also engaging and seeking to attract local investors. It

is intended that the project will be a joint venture between the public and private sectors, under which the Government will provide the land as equity, and focus on infrastructural development. The private sector will be invited to build out the structures to accommodate the ICT industry, in particular. This is in addition to the initiatives that are underway in Portmore, where the GOJ will be building out new facilities to accommodate the expansion of the ICT Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry.

To date, the concept plan has been completed and the MIIC will be seeking expressions of interest from both local and international investors to part-

ner in the development. A memorandum of understanding has been drafted and approved by the Attorney General's Department for signature once a suitable investor has been identified. MIIC is also engaged in finalizing negotiations with the World Bank to identify funding for the completion of the feasibility study. The UDC is well advanced with the process to contract the consultants to undertake the technical studies. The TOR has been developed and the bid put out to tender.

Integral to all of this is the development of the Port of Kingston and its link to the Economic Zone. The port facility offers an enormous opportunity for investment, given its potential for greater utilisation and being one of the most attractive locations for business and development. The possibility exists for future expansion at Caymanas, to obtain even more acreage and to incorporate developments for residential and recreational purposes. Eventually, it is intended that the overall development in that area will be over 2,000 acres and will provide a myriad of opportunities for fostering Jamaica's economic growth and development.

NPS Special Projects — Portmore ICT Park *(Continued on Page 4)*

“NPS Feature Presentations”

JCF Strategic Reform & NPS

In an effort to consolidate resources and avoid overlaps, the NPS Monitoring Board agreed to utilize the existing framework within the Ministry of National Security (MNS), to drive the implementation of the NPS Crime & Violence/Justice priority initiatives.

Through the efforts of the MNS, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) Strategic Reform Implementation Oversight Committee and its Secretariat: the JCF Strategic Review has been completed and the Report tabled in Parliament. The implementation plan and budget have been approved by the National Security Council (NSC); performance indicators developed for planned activities; and implementation teams established and working assiduously at both MNS and JCF.

A Cabinet Submission for the merger of the Police Service Commission (PSC)/Police Civilian Oversight Authority (PCOA) was prepared, the Commissioner's Strategic Board established, and priorities for 2009 finalized. The backlog of 500 Court of Enquiry Disciplinary Cases against members of the force has been reduced to 211; and the upgrade of Twickenham Park (Jamaica Police Academy - JPA) has commenced. The objective is to enhance the accountability mechanisms governing the operations of the JCF, improve public confidence, and review the legislative and administrative framework governing the JCF.



To create a new vision for security and governance within Jamaica, the Ministry has as a priority, the establishment of a separate Expert Team to assist with driving the implementation of the JPA. The team will consist of key public and private sector representatives as standing members of a combined NPS Expert Team on Crime & Violence, with a key objective to increase the capacity of the JCF by approximately 4,000 new officers and establish appropriate standards in recruitment, training and professional development.

Clearing The “Bottlenecks”

In keeping with the Government's undertaking for the elimination of unnecessary bureaucracy, waste of public resources and the efficient delivery of government services; the main goal of the NPS Governance/Reducing Bureaucracy Expert Team is to leverage the NPS public-private partnership in order to address specific gaps in the public sector and to focus on eliminating critical “bottlenecks” which are impeding economic growth and development as well as the implementation of key NPS initiatives.



The team's initial focus is on the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) and improving the legislative drafting and approval process. To this end the Team is working to help drive issues related to, inter alia, the organizational review and analysis of the OPC which is being implemented by the MOJ and OPC under a CIDA initiative. The review has been completed and the final report submitted.

Currently the Team is working on i) the development of a training strategy and framework for personnel within the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that liaise with the OPC; ii) the compilation of a list of priority legislation, which when passed, would facilitate the successful implementation of the NPS initiatives; and iii) seeking to enhance the communication between government departments and the OPC in order to facilitate the rationalization of several bills that are currently inactive due to a lack of information from MDAs.

By addressing legislative support for critical matters of national development, reducing service delivery times and increasing client satisfaction, the Team hopes to have real impact on the efficiency and efficacy of government. Further, it is anticipated that once the current goals are achieved, they will lend support to eliminating other crucial “bottleneck” areas in the public sector.

Moving Land Titling into the Future

The major aim of the Land Titling Expert Team is to accelerate the pace of land titling in Jamaica. In view of this broad mandate the Expert Team has decided to tackle some of the key problems facing land titling.

A 2006 IDB Report found that of the 650,000 parcels of land in the rural land market, only 55% have titles and the majority of those titles are flawed. An expansive campaign of land titling across the island would provide many advantages.

Economic growth in Jamaica is inextricably linked to an increase in domestic production and a key issue thwarting the development of small and medium sized businesses relates to the lack of financing. This lack of access to financing on the part of many poor Jamaicans is, in turn, linked to the lack of property to be used as collateral. Accelerating the pace of land titling would therefore unleash much of the existing entrepreneurial potential of a large group of Jamaicans.

“It has been shown in many countries that widespread, secure, formalized property rights bring substantial economic and social benefits”

The issues related to improving the land titling process in Jamaica are numerous and include lack of funding, limited surveying capacity, difficulties in providing documentary proof of ownership, and the high costs and unclear benefits of land titling.

Over the last year there have been several successes achieved in the area of Land Titling. These include i) the installation of a Virtual Reference Station (VRS) system that will provide a GPS platform that will make surveying easier; ii) the National Land Agency (NLA) has installed new software and hardware that will facilitate the processing of cadastral maps and other titling matters; and iii) working with the NHT and PC Banks to convert their Facilities for Titles portfolio to registered titles.

The NPS Expert Team will build on this work by emphasizing the development of a National Cadastral Map, expanding the reach of the LAMP programme and the provision of titles for Land Settlements. Despite the current global recession and pressures on the budgets of all entities involved in the land titling process, it is imperative that the work started be continued. Accelerating the pace of land titling in Jamaica will prove invaluable to the future growth and development of Jamaica and all Jamaicans.



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Mr. Mark Myers

THE PMO TEAM

Mrs. Sancia Templer, Chief Executive Officer
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NPS Special Projects – PORTMORE ICT PARK

Ranked as one of the top Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) offshore outsourcing locations in the world, Jamaica is the Caribbean's leading contact centre destination. A well developed telecommunication infrastructure, low political, economic and natural risk, and the aptitude of the Jamaican workforce for spoken English (diction and persuasion skills), diligent and hard-working ethos, high quality of service and retention levels, trainability, service quality and firm loyalty offers a distinct advantage in offshore outsourcing.

Encouraged by the research of Jamaica Trade and Invest (JTI), confirming the island's competitive capabilities and potential for achieving 9,000 seats in customer contact/business process/information

technology outsourcing, the NPS ICT/Job Creation Expert Team is moving to target the market and invest in infrastructure to support ICT based business outsourcing as a part of their focus to drive the expansion of BPO industry in Jamaica. They are working to develop a strategy to align private capital with national development objectives under a private/public partnership (PPP) to build out ICT-ready facilities within the next 18-24 months.

Located in Portmore, the country's fastest growing township with its young, well-educated and computer literate population, the Portmore ICT Park will be ideally suited for investors wishing to take advantage of Jamaica's strategic and geographic location in accessing major international markets.

The concept plan has been developed and a consultant contracted to develop the PPP methodology for the implementation of the Park. A draft report has been submitted. In addition, the proposed building site has been identified and private sector consultations are advanced. Once the PPP mechanism is agreed, the architectural design and construction documents will be prepared and tendered in order to begin construction on the Park's facilities which are expected to be state-of-the-art.

The advancement of ICT is not without its challenges, but it has also opened up a vast range of opportunities. Jamaica is well poised to take advantage of these and to advance its economic agenda as a means of achieving its vision.

Your "2 Cents" Worth

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Write in or send us an email and tell us what "GDP" issues are important to you.

- ⇒ What problems are you experiencing in doing business in Jamaica today?
- ⇒ What opportunities can Jamaicans take advantage of in these challenging times?
- ⇒ What do Jamaicans need to know in order to Survive 2009?
- ⇒ What should be the theme of the next National Planning Summit?

Partners in Dialogue

Useful Link-ups!!

- www.miiic.gov.jm
- www.opm.gov.jm
- www.mof.gov.jm
- www.psoj.org
- www.jamaicachamber.org.jm
- www.moeyc.gov.jm
- www.pioj.gov.jm
- www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org
- www.takingresponsibility.org

Right click on the link and select "open Hyperlink" to connect to webpage

imagine The Future

IMAGINE This!

Here's what to look out for in our Next Issue:

- ⇒ What's in a Budget?
- ⇒ Broadening the NPS Focus.
- ⇒ Re-Skilling: Crisis vs Opportunity.
- ⇒ and More.....